

Guide developed by Meryll Levine Page and the Minnesota Humanities Center Veterans' Voices Program







Reflections on War and Service:

An Educator Guide developed by the Minnesota Humanities Center Veterans' Voices Program

Public memory of war and military service in the U.S. is shaped by two important narratives. One story — about duty, heroism, suffering, loyalty, and patriotism — places Veterans' experiences in the context of their contribution to a collective, national good. This is the story of how war is **memorialized.** Another narrative emerges from the intensely personal experiences of individual Veterans. This story is about how war is **remembered**.

Both of these are complex narratives, and the relationship between remembering and memorializing is similarly complicated. War memorials, like those found here in Minnesota on



the State Capitol Mall, those in small communities around the state, and those on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., serve as visual resources for the public to reflect on how war is memorialized and remembered.

In engaging with memorials and their complexity, an opportunity arises to change common stories about Veterans and the experience of military service. That is, in **memorializing** we can better practice **remembering** the individual experiences of Veterans. In such personal reflections we create space for the missing stories - the absent narratives - of service members, Veterans, and military families.

WAR MEMORIALS are an attempt to answer a question: how do we honor and preserve the memory of those who have served? Their existence and our visits to them add to our collective memory of the events and the people they commemorate. And while it is important to honor those who are represented, we must also think about those whose stories are missing.

Visits to these memorials also contribute to our understanding of history. But historical understanding is often concerned with ideas that conflict with honor and preservation. To think deeply about history requires us to ask difficult questions about multiple perspectives, causes and consequences, and the context surrounding the events we are trying to understand.

Engaged citizens also bring in an additional layer of critical thought to their visit. In a participatory democracy, relying solely on an often incomplete memory and historical understanding is dangerous—especially regarding matters of war and peace. In order to truly understand these memorials as they relate to us today, it might be useful to consider how our current conflicts should be memorialized and how they would fit into the landscape here at the Capitol.

As we look forward, we might hope for a future without wars to memorialize. This may indeed be impossible, but even a move in that direction will require improved dialogue aimed at an understanding that is centered on a more inclusive memory, a deeper understanding of history, and a more engaged citizenry. — Scott Glew, Iraq War Veteran, History Teacher

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Introduction

Why a lesson plan for the memorials?

The experience of military service fundamentally shapes the stories one tells; it broadens, deepens, changes perspectives while impacting lives both in and out of uniform. And yet too often these stories - changed as they are by lives of service in the United States military – remain absent or othered in the forums of public life and discourse.

Content

These materials are designed to help you enhance your class's field trip to the Minnesota State Capitol grounds. The focus is on five war memorials:

> The Court of Honor (erected 1951) World War II Memorial (erected 2007) The Korean War Memorial (erected 1998) Vietnam War Memorial-Lakefront DMZ (erected 1992) Minnesota Military Family Tribute (erected 2015)

Objectives

Even without an in-depth background of Minnesota involvement in U.S. military actions, students will:

- Connect with a personal account of a Minnesotan who experienced war.
- Link that story with the monument in front of them on the State Capitol Mall. Post field trip activities will further personalize the history.
- Behave respectfully in a manner defined by their class.

Method

The packet is constructed for students at various levels — upper elementary, middle school, and high school. To individualize learning for your own students, you may decide to select material outside the suggested grade level. You can complete the preparation in one 45-60 minute class period. There is enough material to create an extended unit if it fits your curriculum. The lessons can also be incorporated into your curriculum. For example, 5-6th graders using Northern Lights will find material on World War II in chapter 16, no material on the Korean War, and a passing mention of Vietnam in chapter 17.

Abbreviations

These abbreviations will be used throughout the guide to show appropriate grade levels.

Upper Elementary Е M

Middle School

High School

Н

Structure of the Guide

Section I: Building Context for the Visit

This packet presents a wealth of material that will exceed the parameters of one class period. Think of the material as a content buffet. Choose what fits your students and your curricular goals keeping the objectives in mind. For each topic there is a list of suggested materials to further learning.

Delivery

The material lends itself to a variety of teaching methods. Below are three suggestions.

• Teacher-led discussion

The teacher selects appropriate topics and presents the materials together in discussion with the students. Students listen to the audio as a group and reflect on the content.

Group work

Teacher divides the topics or the five memorials among pre-selected groups of students with guided questions. Students present their findings at the end of class or at the site during the visit. All students listen to all of the recordings.

Learning stations

Teacher sets up five learning stations with material on each monument. Each station includes one interview. Students engage in activities at each station culminating in listening to the interviews. Students each write a reflection on their learning.

Section 2: Visit to the State Capitol Mall's War Memorials

Your presentation of the materials and your tour of the memorials at the Mall can be sequenced to reflect different emphases.

- Chronological—In order of the wars (E,M,H)
 WW II, Court of Honor, Korean War, Vietnam War, Minnesota Military Family Tribute
- Chronological—In order of the monuments' construction on the Mall (M,H)
 Vietnam War, Korean War, World War II, Court of Honor, Minnesota Military Family Tribute
- Order of Encountering the Memorials Walking from the Capitol (E) Court of Honor, World War II, Vietnam War Memorial (west side of WW II), Korean War Memorial (east side of WWII), Minnesota Military Family Tribute
- Single Focus—Korean War Memorial and What's Missing? (H)
- **Single Focus**—Minnesota Military Family Tribute (**E,M**)

Map of the memorials location at the Mall: http://tinyurl.com/gpgbvwq

Section 3: Personalizing the Experience

When you return from the experience, several different approaches are presented for personalizing the experience. We suggest you spend at least part of a class period allowing for student reflection. Some students will have family members who have served in the military. High school boys are close to the moment they will register for draft. History books generally present war in the aggregate, but the memorials allow students to consider the individual.

The materials are elastic. They can be used as an extended social studies, visual arts, or language arts/English project, for one or more class periods, or for part of a class period.

Section I Building Context for the Visit

Introduction

In war and peace time, Minnesotans have served their country in the military. The Minnesota State Legislature deemed it fitting to commemorate these Minnesotans. As you view the memorials on our field trip, think about the following questions:

- What does it mean to be a service member?
- What does it mean to be the family waiting for a service member's return?
- How do you think war changes service members and their families?
- In World War II white men, black men, Japanese-American men, and women served in separate units with different duties. Today units are not segregated by race and gender. Do all who served feel included in the monuments you see on the Capitol Mall?
- We will conclude by deciding on a code of conduct for behavior on the Capitol Mall as we view the memorials.

Each section provides suggested questions around the wars, memorials, and Veteran experiences.

Background and Focus—Providing students background information on the wars and memorials

- Focus on the effect of world affairs on Minnesota citizens pointing out how far removed geographically Minnesota is from all the conflicts. How would carrying out one's duty as a service member affect the service member and his or her family?
- Focus on the difference between volunteering and being drafted. Do you think it made a difference in how men fought in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam? All the women who participated in the three wars were volunteers.
- H Focus on the 'total war' concept of World War II and how a service member would feel if drafted or volunteered to fight in World War II versus a service member who fought in the Korean or Vietnam Wars, both limited wars with less involvement from the home front and less support for the war.

Establishing Connections—Allowing students to relate content to their experiences

- Do you know anyone who has fought or participated in a war? Where? When?
 - Have you ever heard how the person felt about his or her service in the military or how his or her family felt?
- Do you know anyone who has fought or participated in a war? Where? When?
 - Have you ever heard how the person felt about his or her or her service in the military or how his or her family felt?
 - How do you feel when you see a National Guard regiment returning home from overseas duty? How hard do you think it is to be a civilian again?
- Have you thought about serving in the military? What motivates you?
 - Do you know anyone who has served in the military? What have you heard about their experience and the experience of their family?

Monument Focus—Getting acquainted with the monuments themselves

E, M, H

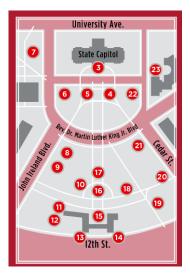
Why would the state of Minnesota create monuments to Minnesota service members?

Select one or more monuments to discuss or break the class into groups to consider one monument per group and report to the entire class. There are photos and information online for each located at: http://tinyurl.com/gpgbvwq.

Corresponding map numbers are below:

World War II (16) Court of Honor (17) Korean War (18) Vietnam War (10)

Minnesota Military Family Tribute new http://www.militaryfamilytribute.org/



Questions —Discussion and reflection questions regarding the monuments

- Who are we remembering when we look at this memorial?
 - How do you think a Veteran of the war would feel when he or she sees this?
- What aspect of the specific war is this monument commemorating? (World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War)
 - What does this memorial commemorate that is not included in the other three memorials? (Court of Honor, Minnesota Military Family Tribute)
 - How do you think a Veteran of the war would feel when he or she sees this?
 - How do you think a Veteran's family would feel when he or she sees this?
 - Is anyone excluded from the memorial who you think should be remembered?
- What aspect of the specific war is this monument commemorating? (World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War)
 - What does this memorial commemorate that is not included in the other three memorials? (Court of Honor, Minnesota Military Family Tribute)
 - Many service members will tell you they were doing their duty as U.S. citizens by participating in the military. What do you think about a memorial to people who are doing their duty?
 - Do you feel differently about the service members who served in the different wars? Were they treated the same when they returned home?
 - What issues do you think could follow a service member or a non-combatant (like a military nurse) home from the battlefield?

Testimony — Learning from Veterans' stories

- You are going to hear Veterans talk about their experiences. Listen closely to each one.
 - Are their experiences similar or different?
 - Which one surprised you? Did any make you feel sad? Proud?
- You are going to hear Veterans talk about their experiences. Listen closely to each one.
 - Are their experiences similar or different?
 - Which one surprised you?
 - How does it change the way you think about war to hear someone talk about it?
- You are going to hear Veterans talk about their experiences. Listen closely to each one.
 - What is similar/different in their testimonies?
 - Did any surprise you?
 - If you could continue the interview beyond the ~90 seconds you heard, what would you ask each person?

Access original interviews and supplementary *Veterans' Voices* materials on the Absent Narratives Resource Collection.

Conclusion — Wrapping up with your students and setting behavior expectations

- It will be tempting on our field trip to let loose and play once we're outside of the Capitol on the Mall.
 - Now that you know about the monuments and something about the service members who fought, how do you think we should act around the monuments?

It may be helpful to write out the suggestions and bring them on the bus for review during your drive to the Capitol.

- Imagine that a school group of younger kids is visiting the war memorials.
 - What behavior do you think is appropriate? Inappropriate?
 - Why might younger kids feel uncomfortable viewing a war memorial?

You know your class—perhaps you can help them draw the conclusion that showing respect for the memorials may feel uncomfortable, but it's appropriate.

- In films and in news coverage you have probably noticed that the military has a protocol, a way of doing things, for almost every activity from making one's bed to eating to speaking to an officer to raising the flag to behavior at a ceremony.
 - Develop a protocol for the class for visiting a memorial to soldiers and their families. Would it be the same for all memorials?

Section 2: Visit to the State Capitol Mall's War Memorials

Before the Visit

Chaperones

If you will need chaperones for your class, consider asking a colleague who is a Veteran or a relative of a student who is a Veteran to accompany you and provide his or her thoughts as you encounter the memorials. Your local VFW may also be a source for a Veteran willing to share their experience with your students.

Decide on your approach to the memorials

Refer to the map located at http://tinyurl.com/gpgbvwq

- Chronological—in order of the wars (E,M,H)

 WW II, Court of Honor, Korean War, Vietnam War, Minnesota Military Family Tribute
- Chronological—in order of the monuments' construction on the Mall (M, H)

 Vietnam War, Korean War, World War II, Court of Honor, Minnesota Military Family Tribute
- Order of Encountering the Memorials Walking from the Capitol (E)
 Court of Honor, World War II, Vietnam War Memorial (west side of WW II),
 Korean War Memorial (east side of WWII), Minnesota Military Family Tribute
- **Single Focus**—Korean War Memorial and What's Missing? (H)
- **Single Focus**—Minnesota Military Family Tribute (**E**,**M**)

Organizing your students

- Decide whether to remain in a large group or divide into five rotating groups or five groups with each focusing on one memorial.
- Remind students about appropriate behavior in front of a memorial.
- Prepare a list of focus questions for your students to hand out while they are looking at the memorials. There are
 descriptions and explanations provided at each memorial, but it may be hard for a large group of students to all
 read the material.

At the Memorials

Decoding the Memorials—for context, see http://tinyurl.com/zbubvuq and http://tinyurl.com/zbubvuq

Symbolism

What symbol(s) do you see? What stories are these symbols trying to tell?

Focus

What aspect of the war is the focus of this memorial?

Veteran connection

Does this memorial reflect what you heard from the Veteran on the audiotape? How or why doesn't it?

What do you think this memorial would make a Veteran remember about the war? If you have a Veteran on your field trip, ask for his or her response.

Section 3: Personalizing the Experience

Introduction

These memorials on the Capitol Mall and the interviews introduce two tensions we commonly face in society. First, how does one erect a monument that honors national memory and at the same time honors each individual story? Second, is the purpose of a monument to recount history or to create a common memory? These are weighty philosophical issues, but they may intrigue students from elementary through high school. The choices in the lessons are targeted to wrestle with the issues of memory and history on an appropriate level for your students. Finally, there is a suggestion for a post visit lesson that features an action plan for students.

Post-Visit Homework and Research

- Assign students to formulate three questions they would want to ask a war Veteran.
 - Direct students to ask one question about monuments and memorials, e.g. does it make a difference to the Veteran if there is a memorial to the war in which he/she served or not?

Assign students to also ask if there is anyone in their community or family who served in a war.

- Who?
- Which war?

If possible, students can ask the three questions of their family members who are Veterans and write down or record the answers.

H Student Research Project—Pick one focus Monument focus

Select one of the monuments as your focus.

- How would you improve on the monument? (Write, draw, or construct your response)
- Write a poem or create an artistic work that expresses your response to one or more of the monuments.

Veteran focus (Can be assigned with a partner to allow time for all to present in one class period)

Contact a Veteran who served during World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, the War in Iraq, or the War in Afghanistan.

Conduct an interview using the same questions you heard on the audiotape and add three
questions of your own. Ask this person how he/she feels about war memorials. Record the
interview and decide what excerpt you'd like to present to the class. (Limit the excerpt to
2-3 minutes.)

Philosophical Essay

Read the following quotes from *The Ethics of Memory* by Avishai Margalit. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002).

- "When history is contrasted with memory, history is habitually labeled as cold, even lifeless, whereas memory can be vital, vivid, and alive." p. 67
- "What is brought to life in successful commemoration is memory..." p. 69
 Students could address any one of these questions or respond to one of their own.
- How do you understand the connection between history and memory?
- Do you think we have an ethical imperative to remember the service of our Veterans and their families?
- How do we fuse history and memory to memorialize?

Background and Focus

- Select one memorial, refer to all memorials, or break students into groups and assign them one memorial as "theirs."
- The memorials we saw at the State Capitol Mall show you what the State of Minnesota has chosen to remember about Veterans and about war. Memorials cannot tell the entire story of the war or include the memories of all the Veterans so the designers make choices.
- This lesson will require students to complete an assignment before you complete the discussion. You can present the background and focus before presenting the assignment in 10 minutes. The lesson utilizing the students' products can be one class period or multiple class periods.

(10 minutes on day one) Minnesota is not the only state to commemorate its war dead. The U.S. is not the only country to erect monuments to those who fought in battle. Some of the oldest monuments in the world remind a civilization of its service members—the Arch of Titus in Rome, for example. http://tinyurl.com/hlxmpqe

Establishing Connection

Ε

- How did you feel when you saw the memorial?
- How do you think the Veteran we heard interviewed might feel seeing the memorial?
- Think about how you might design a memorial.

М

- The memorials we saw at the State Capitol Mall show you what the State of Minnesota has chosen to remember about Veterans and about war. Memorials cannot tell the entire story of the war or include the memories of all the Veterans so the designers make choices.
- (Part of day one or presentation day) You can begin with a poem that illustrates the drive to commemorate our fallen service members: (last verse of "In Flanders Fields" by (Major) John McCrae. 1915)

"Take up our quarrel with the foe:

To you from failing hands we throw

The torch; be yours to hold it high.

If ye break faith with us who die

We shall not sleep, though poppies grow

In Flanders fields."

- According to the poet why do we construct monuments?
- After seeing the memorials at the Capitol, what do you think about the construction of memorials?
- What purposes do you think memorials serve for those who serve/d in the military, families of those who serve/d, and the rest of the citizenry?

Activity

- Provide construction materials—cardboard, Legos, etc. or drawing material. Select a war or a theme for your students or allow them to choose freely which war they would commemorate or which aspect of war they would choose as their focus. Students can work alone or in groups.
 - Design a memorial commemorating [teacher's choice]. Be prepared to tell the rest of the class why you chose the design you did. What symbols might you use? Would you include any writing on the memorial?

Or

- Write a poem or a short story commemorating [teacher's choice]. Be prepared to explain to your classmates why you chose the words you did.
- Compiling a profile—group work, individual work, or whole class discussion.
 - What can you as a class conclude about the importance of memorials?
 - Did the memorials include history you learned about the wars before your field trip?
 - Did you feel the State of Minnesota slighted or forgot any group in the memorials?
 - How would you remember your own family member who participated in a war either as a member of the armed forces or as the family waiting at home?
- H Class presentations

Conclusion

- Post photos of the memorials on the Capitol Mall together with the designs or writing of your own students.
- Can students do anything to help preserve their own family's history regarding military service?
- Has your view of Veterans changed? How?
 - Why is it important to include the Veterans' stories in a memorial?

Alternate Activity (E,M,H)

Here are some ideas for thought questions that can lead to an action plan. The possibilities are limited only by imagination and time constraints.

- After viewing the memorials, how do you think the State of Minnesota could do a better job remembering Veterans and Veterans' families?
- How could you make this a reality—do it!
- What was missing from the memorials? How could you remedy the situation—do it!
- How can we encourage more Minnesotans' awareness of the role Veterans and their families have played?
 How do you make it happen—do it!

Appendix A: Additional Resources

Atlases and Maps

Note: Maps are plentiful online. Atlases, however, frequently provide insightful, pithy summaries that can be useful in presenting background.

Keegan, John. The Collins Atlas of World War II. Grant, R.G. The Korean War (Atlas of Conflicts). Summers, Harry G. Historical Atlas of the Vietnam War.

Films in support of the war

World War II: Why We Fight series http://tinyurl.com/jld3ztm Korean War: The Steel Helmet http://tinyurl.com/jo39ucs Vietnam War: The Green Berets http://tinyurl.com/jo39ucs

Songs in support of war

World War II: "American Calling" http://tinyurl.com/z3snuda

Korean War: "God Please Protect America" http://tinyurl.com/z3snuda

Vietnam War: "I Told Them What You're Fighting For" http://tinyurl.com/gmrjx72

Protest Songs

World War II: None found

Korean War: "The Rotation Blues" More about the plight of the service member than anti-war.

http://tinyurl.com/zkgz8r8

Vietnam War: "I Ain't Marchin' Anymore"—Phil Ochs. http://tinyurl.com/hrfwxb7 Many to choose from.

Sample of the Art of War by Minnesotans

World War II: 1940s Spam ad http://tinyurl.com/hcgncqi

Korean War: Brenda Thour (Brooklyn Center) paintings http://tinyurl.com/hlmwghw

Vietnam War: Gary Moss (Robbinsdale) photographs http://tinyurl.com/hj6hlxd

Books with personal testimony

World War II: The Good War-Studs Terkel

Korean War: Voices from the Korean War http://tinyurl.com/zcvdyd5

Veteran's Memoirs -Index online http://tinyurl.com/hc94z4t

Vietnam War: Vietnam Voices: Perspectives on the War Years, 1941-1975 compiled by John Clark Pratt

Books from Minnesota History Press

World War II:

Dear Poppa. Ruth Berman

The Long, Hard Road. Thomas Saylor

Minnesota Goes to War: The Homefront During World War II. Dave Kenney

One Woman's War Letters Home from the Women's Army Corps 1944-46. Bosanka Green

Remembering the Good War: Minnesota's Greatest Generation. Thomas Saylor

Korean War: none Vietnam War

Sisterhood of War: Minnesota Women in Vietnam. Kim Heikkila

Documents

World War II: National Archives, World War II Records http://tinyurl.com/btc6cut

Korean War: The Truman Library, The Korean War and its Origins http://tinyurl.com/29gqsm3

Vietnam War: Documents, Speeches, Papers http://tinyurl.com/hat2mxd and National Archives, Teaching with Documents: The War in Vietnam—A Story in Photographs http://tinyurl.com/gw2kc29 (terrific resource

for documents for all of U.S. history)

History and Memory

Lies Across America. James Loewen

Memory in Mind and Culture. Pascal Boyer and James V. Wertsch, eds.

The Ethics of Memory. Avishai Marglit

The Memory Boom: Why and Why Now? David Blight

Films about Minnesota Veterans

tpt's Veterans Coming Home stories http://Veterans.tpt.org/stories/

General overviews

World War II: The National WWII Museum, World War II History http://tinyurl.com/c7ojdxk

Korean War: CNN, Korean War Fast Facts http://tinyurl.com/c7ojdxk

Vietnam War: Digital History, Overview of the Vietnam War http://tinyurl.com/zatet3m

Additional resource for Minnesota information on specific topics including individuals' war service can be found in Minnesota History Magazine. http://tinyurl.com/jkcj2mv

After scanning the bibliography, you could ask students why the Korean War, is often labeled, "The Forgotten War."

Appendix B: Background Information for Teachers and Students

	World War II	Korean War	Vietnam War
When? (E, M, H)	Dec. 1941-Aug. 1945	June 1950-July 1953	Nov. 1955-April 1975
	(Outside the US, the Japanese attacked China in 1937 and were surrendered in Aug. 1945. Italy attacked Abyssinia in 1935 and surrendered in 1943. The German attack on Poland began in Sept. 1939. The Nazis surrendered in May 1945) (H)	(War was never declared by Congress so the Korean "War" is technically a "Military Action" authorized by President Truman.) (H)	(Congress did not authorize use of force until The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in 1964, but Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy sent military support to South Vietnam beginning in 1955) (H)
Where? (E , M , H)	Europe, Asia, Africa	North and South Korea	North and South Vietnam

	World War II	Korean War	Vietnam War
Why fight? U.S. Policy (M, H)	"Make the World Safe for Democracy" FDR (H) The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on Dec. 7, 1941 was the trigger (M, H) (The Japanese were allied with the Germans and Italians forming the Axis Powers so a declaration of war against one meant engaging all three powers. President Roosevelt leaned toward involvement before 1941 to stop the Axis aggression, but was leery because he lacked support.) (H)	"The Security Council called upon all members of the United Nations to render every assistance to the United Nations in the execution of this or her resolution I have ordered United States air and sea forces to give the Korean Government troops cover and support." Truman (H) The UN voted to support South Korea's defense when the North Korean Army invaded the South. (M, H) (Truman believed it was a fight between Democracy and Communism.) (H)	"Pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, and support any friendto assure the survival and success of liberty." Kennedy (H) After the French granted independence to Vietnam and North and South Vietnam were partitioned, the North (Communist) invaded the South (Democratic). (M, H) (Both Eisenhower and Kennedy sent military advisers with Kennedy eventually upping the numbers to 21,000. After the Gulf of Tonkin incident, Johnson escalated the war with the number of Service Members peaking in 1968 to 543,482.) (H)
Why fight? Individual Responses (E, M, H)	Volunteer and draft	Volunteer and draft	Volunteer and draft
How did the US encourage support of the war? (M,	Fireside chats, posters, film, music, bond drives, incentive programs for businesses		Speeches, film, music. Less successful in building public support through government media
How many Americans fought?	16,000,000	5,720,000	8,744,000
How many Minnesotans?	300,000	890	68,000
Home front restrictions	Rationing Some censorship	Some censorship	Some censorship

	World War II	Korean War	Vietnam War
Who protested?	America First headed by Minnesotan Charles Lindbergh Pacifist groups like Quakers	Small movement. For info on campus activity in Korean War and Vietnam War protests: See: http://tinyurl.com/zlukp29	Extensive protest movement centered on university campuses. Protests extended to religious groups, and beyond campus
Who became suspect?	Japanese Americans German Americans and Italian Americans to a lesser degree, America First supporters	Communist sympathizers. Red Scare an outgrowth of the war.	Protesters, e.g., SDS members
Who is missing from the memorial? (Students fill this in after viewing.)			
What was the message of the Veteran interviewed?			
MN dead	7800+	738	1077